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WINGS OF YOUTH

BY

NANCY BUCKLEY

With all good wishes,

Nancy Buckley.

WINGS OF YOUTH

By

NANCY BUCKLEY

THE CLOISTER PRESS
SAN FRANCISCO
1922

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SAN FRANCISCO

"Youth took wings and flitted among the clouds for the very joy of being freed from the fetters of earth."

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FOREWORD

IN THIS little book, "*Wings of Youth*," her second collection of published verses, Nancy Buckley has sounded the tender and wistful and also the joyous note of the young heart. The fact that her first book, "Laughter and Longing," published in 1921, is now in its third edition, is sufficient testimony to the quality of her verse and to the cultured discernment of Californians.

A mellower tone than we found in her first collection distinguishes most of the verses in this volume. It shows the growth she has made in an earnest pursuit of her high purpose, and the wider and deeper range of powers she has discovered and is bringing forth.

We need such a strong and wholesome spirit as hers. It will inspire hope and cheer and sane striving against the devastating forces that now, more than ever, tend to drag us from our view of a glorious sun always shining in the sky.

W. C. Morrow.

San Francisco, November, 1922.

Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement is hereby made of the courtesy of American Poetry Magazine, The Nomad, Munsey's Magazine, Argosy, All-Story Weekly, The Signet, The Queen's Work, Social Progress, The Magnificat, New England Homestead, Education, The Californian, Newman Hall Review, Girlhood Days and Extension for permission to use in this volume poems originally contributed to these magazines.

TO MARY ELIZABETH

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CALIFORNIA

WINGS

LOVE has wings that folded lie
Upon my heart with soft caress,
And nevermore they care to fly
From my heart's tenderness.

Love has wings, they've flown away
With never a tear-drop nor a sigh;
How could I hope for them to stay,
When they so missed the sky?

CALIFORNIA

THE SINGERS

I AM but a singer,
Yet I ever dare
Songs to send like arrows
Quivering through the air.

Straight and swift and certain
Flies each little dart,
Home and harbor finding
Within your dear heart.

DREAMERS

DREAMERS are poor as poor can be,
Without a cent put by;
Theirs is the wealth of sun and sea,
And rich-robed earth and sky.

And all their own the silvery moon,
The rainbow's treasure chest;
Red roses in the heart of June,
And love and faith and rest.

THE LITTLE GYPSY

OH! Nina can dance with a gay Spanish dash,
In her bright scarlet dress with broad yellow sash,
And black curls a-flying and eyes dark as sloes,
And music's soft rhythm in her little toes.

Oh! Nina can sing as she strums her guitar,
And sweet songs of Seville float in from afar,
The melody falls from her soft southern tongue,
And birdlings are silent till her song is sung.

Oh! Nina can play on her wee castinets,
The gay tarantella my heart ne'er forgets,
As forth on the highway I laughingly fare,
With sweet Nina and youth and love everywhere.

TO MY FRIEND

YOU are my friend. Give me no more
Of costly gems and golden store,
For these are not the things I prize—
For me let lovelight fill your eyes,
And give to me your tenderness,
Your little broken words that bless
And bear away the bitter pain
And make my heart look up again.
Oh, come into my little room
Whene'er descends the hour of gloom,
And let your love a candle be
To bring the light of hope to me!

THE NET

I'M weaving a silken net for you,
A silken net so fair;
Forever I'll keep you all my own
Safe in its lovely lair.

I'll snare your body so small and sweet
From all life's pain and harm,
And o'er your golden head I'll throw
The magic of its charm.

And fast my net shall wrap you round,
I've wrought it strong and well;
Your little hands alone may break
Its strong and shining spell.

LOVE'S WITCHERY

EACH day's a golden hour to me,
Since I can walk again with thee.
The sea sings sweetly as of old,
And all the laughing days unfold
Their loveliness. The little streams
Go drifting by like fairy dreams;
And o'er the perfumed face of Night
Fall misty veils of silver light.
Glad promise gleams in morning skies,
And dawns, for me, in your dear eyes;
Each day's a golden hour to me
Since I can walk again with thee.

MY LITTLE WINDOW

FROM out my little window near the sky,
I watch the clouds like doves go wandering by.
I hear the song the thrush so sweetly sings,
As golden arrows flash his shining wings.
I see the roses full in scarlet bloom,
Their scented incense fills my tiny room,
And all the world is free from fretful care,
And love and joy and youth are everywhere!
I feel the spell the twilight softly weaves,
And watch the moonlight silver all the leaves,
Then tender dreams of life so sweet a part,
Pass through my little window to my heart.

HOMESICK

THESE city streets are cold and gray,
And very dim and dark;
You never hear throughout the day
The song of meadow lark.

And hyacinths you never find,
Blossoming white and blue;
Not in the city streets unkind
Does Springtime come to you.

These city streets are filled with strife,
Of fight for wealth and fame.
Today I'd give just half my life
To hear you call my name.

GIFTS

I FAIN would give you golden gifts,
But you have gold more rare,
Since your Good Fairy gave to you
A crown of golden hair.

A silver trinket then, perhaps,
Would make your heart rejoice,
But what is silver to a maid
With such a silvery voice?

Or would a gem your fancy please?
You've plenty, I surmise,
Your lips are rubies, rosy-hued,
And diamonds bright, your eyes.

Within this scented garden fair,
A precious gift I'll seek,
To match the lily of your throat,
The roses in your cheek.

THE INTERPRETER

FOR him Life lifts her veil and lets him see
The beauty hid beneath the mystery
Of sunset glory flaming in the sky.
And every gentle breeze that passes by
Leaves soft caress upon his dreaming face,
And violets from the depths of mossy place
Raise trusting eyes. And in the nights of June
Resplendent shines for him a friendly moon.

THE EASTER BELL

OVER the earth there gladly fell
The song of many a golden bell;
Far and near came the joyous chime
That heralded the Easter time.
So loud, so clear, its music rang
As sweet as if an Angel sang:
"Lo! Death and Darkness both have fled
Since Christ is risen from the dead."
O! little bell, tell wind and wave
That Love has triumphed o'er the grave.
Fill all the earth with joyous strain;
Ring out, sweet bell, again—again!

THE LITTLE OLD HOUSE

AROUND the door red roses grow,
And as the soft June breezes blow,
Shy little dreams from petals creep
And mystic tryst with memory keep.

They let their tiny fingers rest
Upon the old wall's broken crest,
They lift their little faces high
As if to touch the clear blue sky.

They try to ease the bitter smart,
That lives within the broken heart
Of the sad house, so brown and old,
That 'neath the flaming sun is cold.

Shy little dreams—your labor's vain;
The little house won't smile again.

MY SWEETEST SONG

MY SWEETEST song was stilled
Alas! by your own hand,
The day you sailed away
To a far distant land.

My sweetest song was filled
With notes of keenest pain;
My thoughts were of primroses
Along an Irish lane.

My sweetest song is filled
With joy-notes strong and clear;
My thoughts are all of roses,
For you at last are here!

HEART O' MINE

WHY are you sad, oh! heart o' mine?
Is the load heavy, or day too long?
Now that the sun has ceased to shine,
Have you forgot your song?

You must be glad, oh! heart o' mine,
And bright and gay through pain and wrong,
And when your spirits begin to pine,
Must sing your sweetest song.

SILVER SHIPS

I SIT beside a sapphire sea,
And watch my ships come home to me,
And all the world is bright with flame,
Answering my joyous heart's acclaim.

Their sails are made of pale white mist,
By beams of morning softly kissed;
Their freight is dreams, a precious store,
Gathered upon some shining shore.

Come, little ships of silver hue,
Bring me fond hopes and visions new,
Bring me the dreams I lost one day,
When my Beloved went far away.

A GYPSY'S LONGING

I'M HEARING the words that you whisper so slow,
The soft words of love that are tender and low,
But oh! my wild heart is a-roaming the dale-
My wild gypsy heart, that cares not for love's tale.

I'm seeing your eyes and the promise they hold
Of the wealth of the world and the glitter of gold,
But oh! my wet eyes that are straining to see
The hills of the gypsies, the hills of the free!

I'm touching your lips all aflame with desire,
And my heart is a-pulsing so close to the fire—
But oh! 'tis the hills that I'm wanting, my dear,
The hills where I wandered that spring of the year.

CANDLES

THERE is a shrine within my heart,
Where two small candles burn,
And when the day's last beams depart,
To their bright light I turn.

One candle is your love for me,
And one my love for you;
Your love is strong as the mighty sea,
And mine is deep and true.

The little candles ever glow,
At dusk or morn the same,
And up their bright flames quickly go,
When each speaks the other's name.

A SONG WITHOUT WORDS

THERE is a song within my heart,
A song I long to sing,
But all the labor on my part
No fitting words can bring.

Yet all the calm and quiet trees,
Sing it throughout the day,
And all its tender harmonies
On breezes float away.

And from the throat of every bird,
Asway above his nest,
The music of my song is heard,
The song within my breast.

RENDEZVOUS

I'LL surely come some happy day
To our loved rendezvous,
Nor time nor space can keep away
My longing heart from you.

It may be in the crowded street,
Where Life goes on apace,
But I shall know you when we meet
And smile into your face.

It may be in the hush of night,
I'll see your loveliness;
My heart will run like wingèd light,
To meet your sweet caress.

Nor life nor death can keep away
My longing heart from you;
Sometime—I'll come—perhaps today
To our loved rendezvous.

FOR MARY ELIZABETH'S BIRTHDAY

IF I but knew just how to say
The thoughts that fill my heart today,
I'd write a sonnet fine and grand,
And put it in your little hand.

If I but knew just how to sing
Of Youth on happy shining wing,
I'd sing a song for you to hear
And trill it to your little ear.

If I but knew just how to show
My love for you through weal and woe,
I'd take my soul—the better part,
And place it in your little heart.

OUR LADY OF THE FLOWERS

THE glory of the Spring is falling o'er
The ye ar. The silver-throated songsters pour
Their bursting hearts in sweetest melody
That thrills the raptured air to ecstacy.
And at our Lady's shrine, the lily fair
Lifts her pure face, a gentle nun at prayer;
And near her is the rose in glad array
Of splendid scarlet satin, bright and gay.
Wee violets, the blue of summer skies,
Their loving hearts a-tremble in their eyes,
Look up at Mary and with smiles so sweet,
They lay their lives as offerings at her feet.

THE BEST KIND OF A GAME

LET'S play that the whole world is shining,
And filled with gay laughter so bright;
With never a word of repining
From morning to star-covered night.

Let's play that the rose's red beauty,
Is filling the land with perfume,
Let's find that there's pleasure in duty,
And nothing but heartache in gloom.

Let's play that the blithe birds are flinging
Their happiness all through the air,
Let's play that our life's full of singing
With hope and soft love everywhere.

LIFE'S SNARE

LIFE offered treasure rich to me,
Soft gleaming pearls from the Orient sea,
And worldly fame—and beauty's dower,
With golden wealth and place and power.

With eager hands I took the store
Of Life's fair gifts and begged for more;
Then found too late with bitter dole
They forged gold fetters for my soul.

LITTLE ROADS

SOMETIMES I walk on a little white road
That leads through the fair heart of June,
And Joy holds my hand as I saunter along,
And eventide comes all too soon.

Sometimes I walk on a little gray road,
That leads to a dull sullen sea,
And my heart is a bitter and burdensome thing,
For Grief makes the journey with me.

THE SECRET ROOM

I HAVE a room within my heart
Where all my memories are,
Small honored guests, these little dreams
That come from near and far.

When I am sad I enter in
And meet your loving smile
That made my joy and happiness,
For such a little while.

And in the little room I light
The lamp of deathless love,
And all my sorrow quickly goes,
Like flight of swiftest dove.

CYNTHIA IN HER GARDEN

SHE touches with white hands the flowers fair,
And they look up and smile to see her there,
And softly breathe a shy yet warm caress,
Upon the airy brightness of her dress.

Then tender dreams that in old gardens bide
Come eagerly swift-thronging to her side,
She mothers them—her precious treasure-trove,
Till, creeping in her heart, they kindle love.

GRAY EYES

I DO not care for eyes of blue,
Though warm they are, and pure, and true;
Nor eyes of brown, so soft and deep,
Where tender dreams and fancies sleep.

I care not for black eyes that flash,
And all one's dear hopes rudely dash;
That laugh and dance and mock and tease,
Invoking mischief as they please.

But, oh, I yearn for eyes of gray!
So calm and sweet and softly gay,
Such dear gray eyes as, long ago,
For me made heaven here below.

A LITTLE GIRL'S GARDEN

I HAVE a little garden fair,
With soft dreams floating everywhere,
Filled with tall lilies, gold and white,
Shy violets and roses bright.

I listen to the drowsy rhyme
The river makes in summer-time;
I lie upon the grass so cool
Beside a quiet little pool.

I dream I am a princess grand,
The greatest lady in the land,
Bright jewels on my fingers shine,
And golden wealth untold is mine.

I dream I am a fairy small,
Who never wants to grow at all,
Who plays all through the happy hours
With dancing leaves and laughing flowers.

THE MARTYR

THE sun hangs high in Heaven, darting down
The glory of a springtime on the town,
The splendid beauty of the opening rose,
The promised wealth of music in some close
Full throated warblers pour unto the sky
A very incense-cloud of harmony.
The games will be anon and eager feet
Hasten from every way and every street
Pours down its tide with never ceasing flow—
Where stands the Coliseum vast below.
Lo! Lo! today, even today, glad hands
Will loose the fretful tiger from his bands,
And fling unto the lions with a cry,
The few who worship Christ, and hence must die.
A voice is heard: "To us Pancratius yield!"
Then the gates fall, and on the sandy field
Stands forth the very flower of Youth, as fair
As when at night unto the raptured air
Some lily breathes its ardent soul and dies,
At joy of death wrapt in high ecstacies.

"Ah! Emperor, master, Christ is mine and I
Am Christ's. Your sovereign mandate bids me die
Your gods are Rome's, Christ mine, and therefor
falls
Thy wrath upon me. Lo! 'tis joy. All palls
When matched with it, and seems but tears,
But tears and a legion of broad, phantom fears."
"The panther"—wakes a voice—"he comes, he
springs!"
Then with the mounting shriek that fiercely rings
They watch the panther move across the space,
They watch the smile upon the boyish face-
Then in a brilliant glare of light they see
Him, and his Christ triumph eternally.

TRYST

WHEN evening fires are burning low,
Into my room I softly go;
In this sweet hour I love the most,
To tender dreams I am the host.

Close to my chair each loved one stands;
I feel the clasp of friendly hands;
I hear the breathing of their sighs,
And see the smile within their eyes.

The night without is gray and old,
And all my heart is bitter cold;
'Tis then, fair dreams, I miss you so,
You and the hour when fires are low.

The world is full of foolish things;
Its siren voice forever sings.
Dear dreams of love, be with me yet,
Lest I your sweetness all forget.

ENSHRINED

JUST now the firelight painted
A picture on my wall;
A picture of my sweetheart,
So dazzling fair, and tall.

And then the shadows entered,
And bade my dream depart;
I straightway put the picture
Within my eager heart.

MACUSHLA

YOUR lips are fair beguilin'
As they sing a happy tune,
Your eyes are always smilin'
Like the sunny skies in June.

Your hair all bright and shinin'
Is made of fairy gold,
It sets my heart a-pinin'
To own its wealth untold.

But oh! your love, Macushla,
Your love so fond and true,
'Twas God above, Macushla,
Made the Irish heart of you!

THREE LOVELY THINGS

I SAW three lovely things today,
At morn, a little child at play,
Her hair a net that caught the sun
And held its gold till day was done.

At noon, I saw a boy aflame
With glowing dreams of love and fame;
His eager heart bridged o'er the years,
And felt their joy—but not their tears.

I saw a toil-worn man at night,
Come to a little home, alight
With sweet content; upon the stair
Wife and child were waiting there.

There came three lovely things my way,
At morn, at noon, at close of day,
And each one brought a gift to me
To store within my memory.

IMMOLATION

NOT for the martyr's crown
I pray, dear Lord,
Not for the quick fierce death
By heathen sword.
Not for the battle's cease,
The victory won,
Not for the long cool rest
At set of sun.
But still the lonely life
From all apart,
But still the gnawing pain
Of bruiséd heart.
But still upon the cross
For love of Thee,
Until at last, at last,
Thy Face I see.

DUSK IN A GARDEN

I FEEL the breath of summer air,
I hear a whispered message there
And raise my eyes, in awe, to see
The soul of Night unveiled for me.

REGRET

I BANISHED you with jesting
That heeded not your fears,
I turned to love and laughter
And found no place for tears.

Now that you're gone, I'm wiser,
I seek you everywhere,
My eyes are wet with weeping
And life's no longer fair.

THE HOUSE O' DREAMS

OVER the river upon the hill
Is a little brown house, fast-shut and still;
Around it circle sighing trees
That whisper a plaint to the passing breeze,
And over it trailing shadows go
In endless search for flowers a-blow.

Over the river upon the hill,
When starry night is cool and still,
Then comes a dream of days of old—
A dream of love too long untold.
My heart runs vainly to the door
Of the little house on the misty shore.

A SONG OF YOUTH

LIFE calls me out on the sunlit road,
Out where the winds blow free,
There's never a sorrow in my light load
Nor a care in the heart of me.

And I'll drink my fill of red romance—
Of love and laughter gay—
And along with me will the lassies dance
To the lilt of a rondelay.

And when the moon o'er the shining trail
Casts a veil of silver light,
We'll charter a ship of dreams and sail
Away on the sea of night.

NOSTAGLIA

A SILVER mist above a summer sea,
The daffodils a-blow upon the lea,
The march of stars across the moonlit dome
Bring poignant longing for the hills of home!

IDYL IN A GARDEN

WE WALKED in a little garden
All drenched with silver dew,
I said: "How blue those violets!"
"Your eyes are yet more blue."

I touched a slender lily,
So tall and gold and fair;
"A priceless thing," I whispered,
"More priceless gold, your hair."

I plucked a rose so lovely,
"The sweetest flower," I said,
"But oh, your lips are sweeter!"
Said he, as he bent his head.

THE ENCHANTED LAND

CAN'T you hear the fairies? Their singing fills
the glen;
Can't you see them dancing? The gayest little men,
Dressed in green and yellow, with tiny silver shoon
That catch their glint and sparkle from June-time's
golden moon.

Can't you hear them whispering, whispering soft
and low,
All the wondrous secrets that you so long to know?
But you must ne'er be telling a thing you chance to
hear;
The fairies would be sorry they let you come so near.

Don't you want to travel, these many leagues away,
To where the fairies revel through the night and
day?
The train will soon be leaving, on a track of golden
dust,
'Tis this you'll need for luggage: a heart of simple
trust.

THE VAMPIRE

HER hair that gleams as morning light,
Filled with the sunbeams hidden gold,
Her slender arms that warm and white
Can happiness and bliss enfold,
Her eyes, that like dark fires shine,
And like dark fires soon destroy,
Her lips that glow like scarlet wine
And bid men drink of their sweet joy,
All, all, her body's beauty rare,
Long slipped the leash of firm control—
Is used as bait to catch and snare
And kill a man's immortal soul.

PARADOX

SOMETIMES I laugh and sing
To hide my fears—
My heart a haunted thing
Abrim with tears.

Sometimes I softly weep,
For joy is mine,
And Love keeps vigil sweet-
My heart his shrine.

AT NIGHT

SLEEP'S gentle fingers draw me to her feet
And soon she gives me dreams so bright and sweet,
To hold within my hands and taste their joy,
And find their gold is all without alloy.

And then she hides me 'neath her purple dress,
Then come her lips, my own to gently bless,
And in my ears soft rings the elfin call
That bids the heavy wings of rest to fall.

HAVEN

OH! for the peace of a tiny farm,
And a path that climbs a hill;
And your dear voice, potent charm,
Singing the love songs still.

Oh! for a home, sweetheart o'mine,
By meadow and winding lane,
And sweet wet violets that shine
With glint of April rain.

Today I glimpse through door of dreams,
This haven of the heart;
E'en fancied joy has power, it seems,
To heal the bitter smart.

BY AN OPEN WINDOW IN JUNE

HOW sweet is the fragrance that perfumes the air,
The wealth of red roses abloom everywhere;
The skies of bright sapphire are all bending low
Above the sweet earth where the soft breezes blow.

And there, past the hills, is the smile of the sea,
And the little worn path that led you to me.
The heart in my breast is calling your name
As it called it so softly the first day you came.

The roses are lonely—they're drooping today—
For June isn't June, because you're away;
Come back! Ah, Macushla, you answer no word,
Out there in the din my heart isn't heard!

MAID O' MINE

DEAR little maid with eyes of blue,
You bring such lovely gifts with you:
Your golden dreams undimmed by care—
Your love—your faith so sweet and rare.

Dancing along through merry hours,
Heeding not the passing showers,
You sing in voice of gentle tone
The softest winds have made their own.

You bring me dreams of tender things,
Of butterflies and flashing wings,
Of days that hold the kiss of June,
Of nights lit by a baby moon

Of little saints with folded hands,
Of gardens where the lily stands,
Of meadows silvered o'er with dew—
These are the dreams you bring with you.

MY SONGS

I SPIN my songs from sun to sun,
And fleetly weave my dreams
And yet my work is never done,
But just begun, it seems.

For every morn, the golden rays
Of sun come through the trees,
And evernew the moonlight strays
Upon the sapphire seas.

All through the day I see your eyes,
So sweet and soft and clear,
And in the night, in swift surprise,
I hear your voice so dear.

So ever I spin my little song,
And weave my dream so true,
For every hour that speeds along
Brings new sweet thoughts of you.

LIFE'S GARDEN

I WALKED in a lovely garden,
All filled with flowers rare,
And I wanted just one blossom,
A red rose growing there.

But so tall it grew and stately,
So high above my head
That I could never reach it,
My rose so sweet and red.

Ah! what is a lovely garden
If my heart has no repose?
And what are all splendid flowers,
If I cannot reach my rose?

THE VENDOR OF DREAMS

I'VE dreams to sell—fair dreams and bright—
Wrapped up in silver lace,
And they will fill your heart with light
And smile into your face.

I've dreams of Spring—of happy Spring—
When hearts beat brave and high,
I've dreams all caught in a golden ring
And hid in a roguish eye.

Would you like a dream of wee sweet lips,
Or a dream of a night in June?
Perchance a dream of treasure ships
A-sail 'neath a silver moon?

Come buy, come buy . .. I'm on my way,
I care not for your gold,
I sell my dreams for a smile so gay,
Or a heart that ne'er grows old.

THE PIPER

OH! LIFE was piping on flute of gold,
And I followed him fast along,
And my heart was pulsing brave and bold,
As it sang a gay gypsy song.

Oh! Love was calling, for it was Spring,
And I heard his eager cry,
And forth I fared me, adventuring
Under the tender blue sky.

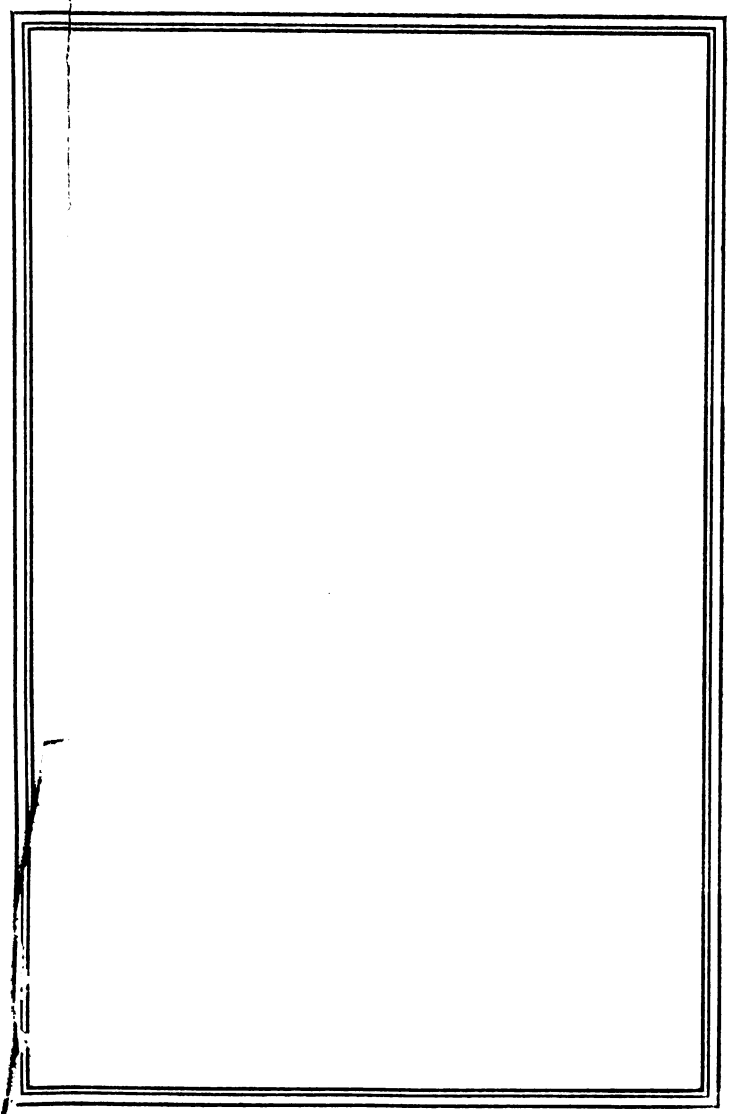
Oh! we three went dancing along the way,
As Life piped his maddest tune,
And then, at the close of the golden day,
We dreamt 'neath the smiling moon.

FULFILLMENT

THE ardent sun with laughter gay
Kissed the modest dawn.
And ere had come the blush of day
A rose was born!

Joy dwelt within the poet's heart,
Like a captive bird,
When Sorrow tore the bars apart,
A song was heard!

Youth gave the cup of Life to me,
I saw its jewels shine,
I drained it, oh, so eagerly,
And Love was mine!



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